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Chief, ICAPS

11 March 1948

Assistant Director, Reports and Estimates

Proposed Standard Operating Procedures for Facilitating
Departmental Participation in Preparation of National
Intelligence and National Intelligence Surveys

Reference: Letter, February 16, 1948, to Admiral Hillenkoetter
from W. Park Armstrong, Jr., Special Assistant to
Secretary of State for Research and Intelligence,
subject as above, with enclosure as stated

1. ORE has many minor criticisms of reference proposal, but as it is presumed that these could be ironed out in conference, only the larger issues will be treated here.
2. A controlling factor in any coordination procedure agreed upon by CIA should be a degree of flexibility sufficient to allow us to meet changing responsibilities without having to overhaul and rebuild existing machinery. The last six months have given us new tasks for the NSC and JIC, and we do not know what new developments may face us. Any procedure adopted, to be satisfactory to CIA, must avoid even the appearance of applying only to the types of reports now being produced.
3. In regard to Paragraph 1 of reference, dealing with current intelligence publications, no great change is suggested, but it should be pointed out that the reference suggests a broader distribution of the CIA Daily and Weekly Summaries at the working level than is now authorized. Dissemination of these two publications is determined by the NSC, and quite recently, at the suggestion of the Department of State, the NSC reduced the list of recipients.
4. In regard to the proposals for national intelligence reports and estimates, your attention is drawn to paragraph 2a of the proposed procedure. The second sentence of that paragraph states that: "Normally, reports falling in this category will be based upon departmental intelligence prepared in the first instance by the responsible Departmental intelligence organization either at the special request of CIA or for Departmental or other purposes." The word "normally" presents several questions, but particularly leaves in the air who is to decide when a situation is or is not "normal". It is quite possible to interpret this sentence as meaning that ORE shall be totally dependent on the departmental

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intelligence organizations for the basic material of its reports and estimates. Such reliance on departmental intelligence presupposes an organization of a different type than that which ORE has become. This problem is certainly worthy of consideration on its merits, but it should not be decided as a corollary to a proposed procedural change in the existing order of things.

5. The State Department proposal for a rigid time schedule to be followed in connection with the coordination procedure seems quite unrealistic. In this connection, no specifications are made as to the normal time required by departmental agencies to prepare contributions to national intelligence estimates. Assuming it to be at least five days, which is the time allowed by reference proposal for ORE's preparation of a first draft, the procedure with respect to "regular" papers would require at least 21 days to complete. By definition the category includes papers due in 11 days. Similarly, the procedure with respect to "urgent" papers would require at least 11 days to complete, although by definition the category includes papers due in from 3 to 10 days. The committee procedure proposed with respect to "immediate" papers is quite impractical and most time-wasting, as a method of drafting. ORE's experience is that it is sometimes difficult to arrive at an agreed form for a paper when in conference with only one agency at a time.

6. The proposal to submit departmental statements of concurrence or substantial dissent at the time of agreement on the final draft of a paper would be very warily received by ORE. It will be recalled, however, that similar proposals put forth by this office in the past have been categorically rejected by ID and A-2, and there is no reason to suppose that the attitude of those agencies has in any way changed.

7. In regard to the proposals concerning National Intelligence Surveys, ORE believes it impossible even to enter upon discussion of the proposal that CIA personnel be loaned to the intelligence agencies for the purpose of assembling material and preparation of the agencies' contributions to NIS's. As set forth in the National Security Council directives, it is the function of CIA not to produce, but to coordinate, edit and publish the NIS program. Based as it is on the foregoing delimitation of responsibilities, the personnel structure of ORE is not designed to do fundamental research and compilation of basic intelligence. Consequently, no personnel are now on hand or provided for in the future that would be available for loan to the departments to discharge duties which these departments have hitherto insisted are their own function. It should be noted also that all procedures for

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for the NIS program have already been agreed on by the departments and are working in a manner very satisfactory to all parties concerned. It would be a great mistake to change the existing procedure.

8. It is believed that the last sentence of Paragraph 3b of reference proposal contains a misprint. No basis can be conceived for the statement that "OIR will publish and disseminate the NIS."

9. Underlying the entire reference proposal is the question of priorities. The proposal glibly sets forth a rigid time schedule for various types of material to be submitted to CIA, but the agencies have in general been quite unable to meet deadlines, even when the latter have been set in consultation with them and agreed to by them. If such a procedure is adopted and the departments undertake the production of various parts of a CIA estimate, how can there be any reasonable assurance that they can or will meet necessary deadlines? Their own departmental requirements often cannot be forecast and they are continually and necessarily being interrupted by spot demands from the high offices of their departments. For example, the various sections on economic matters allocated to the Department of State as its contribution to the Defense Project are many months behind schedule. When the discussion of the Marshall Plan was first initiated, every economist in OIR was put to work on the ERP, which was quite properly given a high priority. It seems unlikely that the departmental agencies would agree that CIA requests should take priority over their own departmental work. Under these circumstances, it would be impossible for CIA to meet its responsibilities to the NSC and to the coordinated intelligence effort.

10. As ORE does not wish to appear capable of nothing but purely destructive criticism, there is attached hereto a draft proposal for reform of the present coordinating procedure which is believed to be realistic and a possible basis for negotiation with the intelligence agencies.

THEODORE BABBITT

enclosures: (1) Reference letter and
attachment
(2) ORE draft proposal re
subject

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